

CHAIRSHOTS

ISSUE #17

JAN. 21, 1994

\$1.00



CS #17 DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF MIKE ROSE



SHOOTKICK

by Jeff Bowdren

Well, here's another year of Shootkicks coming at ya....I hope everybody had a good holiday season, or at least as good as Bobby Bowden, who had two Christmas mornings this holiday season. I guess that makes it: Notre Dame-31 National Champs-24. There, now that I've got that off of my chest, onto this month's award. Which, I must unfortunately give to myself! A hell of a way to start the new year, huh? Anyway, a few issues ago I said that Ric Flair should hang 'em up and walk away from the biz. This caused much consternation and heartache for Dave Flaherty, Chairshots resident drunk/metalhead/tit bar expert. Well Dave, in the spirit of "Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus", I now give you..."Yes Dave, there still is a Nature Boy".

You have to wonder about the brain surgeons in the front offices of WCW. They may be the worst promoters in the history of wrestling (now that is saying something) but every once in awhile, a blind squirrel gets an acorn, you know what I mean? The whole scenario with Flair, Vader, & Okerlund at Starrcade was tremendous. Flair was stoked to the gills in front of his hometown crowd and give credit to Vader, who is a very believable world champion. Isn't it funny that the after watching how great this was we have to put up with the Super Shockmaster? Just wonderin'...

I just got the Observer with the year end awards and was glancing at it and had a few thoughts: I really hope some of you gave consideration to Steve Williams for "Most Improved". He really took a step forward as a singles wrestler this year. I'm also wondering who the hell the people were who voted for Stan Hansen & Ted Dibiase in the "Tag Team" category. What year were you watching them compete in? Because if it was from '93, you must have been voting from memory, because the team from '93 was certainly not one of the best teams in the world. Ditto for the Steiners. Ugh! How about a vote for "Most Overrated"? These guys have two or three really good matches with the Japanese guys every year and spend the rest of the year bitching because they don't get paid enough! So all of a sudden I've been getting all these comp issues of Jeff Mullins' Son of Pro Wrestling Sushi. As some of you may know, there's this "feud" going on between Mullins and Meltzer, and so Jeff has been asking people to write in with comments about Dave, pro & con. Well, one of the letters is from Evan Ginzburg, who I've never met and have absolutely nothing against, but who's brain vapor locked as he wrote to Jeff wondering "What has Dave given back to Wrestling since he has obviously gotten so much out of it?" This raises the important question, who gives a rat's ass? I've been thinking about it, and I have come to the definite conclusion that Evan has way too much time on his hands. I mean come on! What sort of politically correct nonsense is that? Are we all supposed to "give back" something to whatever industry or company pays our salary? If we are, I'd like to mention that Greg Goode works for a cable company and I think he should arrange that all subscribers get free cable for a month or something. Trust me, he's got connections. Anyway, hey Evan! Nothing personal, but get a life! Dave owes wrestling jack.

And now the moment we've all been waiting for: let's get to my buddy Pete "Got a little bit mental last issue" Lederberg. I'll be honest with you. After reading Pete's column in the last issue, I had a couple of thoughts. 1st, I wondered if Pete actually took the time to read the damn thing. I went thru his column and found myself saying things like, "Hey, I never said that" and picking out all the factual inaccuracies. Don't get me wrong. I have no problem with Pete having a difference of opinion with me. I have no problem with anyone having a difference of opinion with me. The problem I did have was that Pete let his personal friendship with Lawler get in the way of his objectivity on the subject and that he also decided to interject his personal opinion on my relationship with my wife into it. Actually I had a big problem with that. Let's take a look at them one at a time.

Pete spent much of the past year in his columns talking about how we should all say what's ever on our mind, etc, ad nauseum. So what does that apparently mean? Well, what it apparently means to me is that we're allowed to say whatever the hell we feel like as long as its not a knock on Jerry Lawler. You see, I have this theory. I think we're all marks about something. It doesn't have to be about necessarily about wrestling. Me, I'm a mark about Notre Dame football. Flaherty, he's a Flair mark. John Hitchcock's a mark for Double A. (Hey Hitch, that's something to be damn proud of big man) And Pete, well he's a mark for Lawler. I'm not saying this as an insult to Pete or anyone else I've mentioned. As a matter of fact, its sort of refreshing. The point is that Pete forgot that while he was writing his column last issue. He lost his objectivity on the subject of Jerry Lawler. While he was at it he wrote some things that were pretty outrageous. How about his comment that "How many of you high & mighty are guilty of statutory rape or victims"? Say what? Well, that'll certainly get the old subscription numbers up. Accusing the readers of being child molesters and all, I mean. He also writes, "in reference to Lawler's guilt or innocence, that "If you have a doubt in your mind, even if its 1%...", guess what Pete. WRONG!! Any 1st year law student could tell you that the standard in a criminal case, or burden of proof on the state is "beyond a reasonable doubt". There is no percentage attached to that, be it 1% or 100%. The funny thing is that within the body of the article I wrote that so incensed you I wrote "Jerry Lawler is not guilty of anything at this point". Look it up. I thought I pretty much bent over backwards trying to let the readers know that Lawler wasn't guilty of anything at that point and that it was a little early for the lynch mob mentality to set in. As to you reference to the nickname "Bowdren the Bōoker", let the record reflect that I did not give myself that name, the guru nicknamed my series of articles in the Observer that in 90-91. Some people started calling me that during that time period, but I'd like to think that I'm not that wrapped up in myself. The funny thing is for as much as you say you hate the nickname, you referred to me by that nickname in your article! Look it up. So, who's the hypocrite now Pete?

Finally there was the veiled reference to my wife and I in Pete's column. Some of you may have missed it, but not everyone. I refer to his remark about what I would do in a similar situation as Lawler, or if I was accused of something like "being emasculated by a woman". I was pretty shocked by the remark. Pete & I have been friends over 5 years now. I thought it was a cheap shot, not a chair shot. I just feel that someone's personal life is out of bounds within the pages of a newsletter. Lord knows that a lot of us know one another and if given the opportunity to could certainly embarrass the hell out of each other. I think its okay to joke around, but to give an opinion like that was just out of line. And I'll be honest with you. After the column came out I got quite a few phone calls asking me if I was going to write a response. My first thought was that within the pages of this newsletter I was going to rip Pete a new asshole. I was stoked and I was going to make him look bad. I actually wrote a column that was dripping with cheap shots at Pete. But you know what? I read it to Barry and a few others and began to wonder what the hell the point was. If I gave Barry the column, where the hell would it end. Pete would write another column ripping me and then so on and so on, etc. Who the fuck heeds the aggravation? We're talking about wrestling for God's sake? This is not something that in the grand scheme of life that is that important. If it becomes that, its just not that important. If that makes me "emasculated by a woman", well so be it. Besides that, the other night I got a phone call from a guy who's been a friend of mine for about 5 years. After a few minutes of venting, we hung out and shot the shit. Something we hadn't done in about a month.....



ARENA RAMBLINGS

BY
RON
LEMIEUX

Hope everyone had a great holiday season and you have stuck to your resolutions so far. I know I haven't. Before going any further I'd like to extend my condolences to Barry on the death of his father. My prayers go out to you and your family.

It's been a while. So let's do some news and then commentary....The Royal Rumble PPV of course will be history by the time you read this but there was also a royal rumble in Madison Square Garden on Monday, January 17. Besides the tag titles going back to the Quebecers, Owen Hart won the rumble. Due to weather conditions in other parts of the country, the Rock N' Roll Express and the Heavenly Bodies couldn't make it. Ivan Putski was there but didn't work. Sgt. Slaughter was one of the subs in the rumble. One real down note on the match was that the 1-2-3 Kid suffered at press time was reported to be a broken leg when he went over the top rope. The last four in were Bret and Owen Hart, Fatu, and Shawn Michaels. Bret got eliminated followed by Michaels. Owen then got rid of Fatu to win.....Besides the trio match between Shane Douglas-Terry Funk-Sabu, ECW has a tag title match on 2/5 in Philly with Kevin Sullivan and Tazmaniac vs. Pat Tanaka & The Sheik.... 1/17 in Memphis saw Buddy Landell beat Dutch Mantell, Bruise Brothers over Moondogs, Skull Von Kruss upset Jerry Lawler but Lawler came back to team with Brian Christopher to beat The Gilberts.....Killer Kowalski's IWF on 1/14 in Westwood, Ma headlined with Mr. Hughes DDQ with Warlord.....Peach State wrestling on 2/5 headlines with Jake Roberts vs. Dick Slater....Next World Wide Disney tapings are slated for 2/7-2/10. Next area house show is in Lakeland on 2/13 with Flair, Sting, Bossman vs. Rude, Vader, Simmons, Pillman-Regal, Austin-Rhodes, Nasties vs. Arn & Steamboat.....The Orlando Sentinel had a picture of Hulk Hogan facelocking Jim Neidhart during a taping of "Thunder In Paradise". The show has been getting a lot of publicity in this area since they shoot at Disney. Lots of people predict the show will be real successful since its by the same people who do "Baywatch".....Looks like Fez Whatley from the "Ron & Ron" show got in a little trouble recently. It all started when they had Randy Savage in the studio one day. Savage is a regular call in guest and friend of the crew. They did a gay quiz show for callers to call in with the answer. The question had to do with a brother tag team that Whatley insinuated was gay. He said he got the info from Savage. The team ended up being Jack & Jerry Brisco. Needless to say, Jerry heard about it since the WWF was in Florida for three days. Savage obviously was doing it as a rib to Jerry. However, Whatley then went on and talked about an incident where Jack & Jerry sexually assaulted him which if you knew Fez's character was all a joke. You knew he caught heat for all this because the following Monday Whatley was apologizing all show long with Ron & Ron both saying numerous times how great the Brisco auto body shop is. Fez admitted he lied about the whole thing because he wanted to make Savage think he was inside the biz. (A work of course) He now wants only to be called, "Big Fat Liar". Fez still does the most awesome and funny Ric Flair schticks around. Today he did a Nature Boy interview on the Nancy Kerrigan-Tonya Harding fiasco. Speaking of which, how many people out there really think Tonya is innocent? Yeah, sure.....After seeing a WWF show in Daytona Beach on 1/6 I think this group should consider giving up house shows. Was the worst house show I've seen in quite some time. You look up lazy in the dictionary and just about every wrestler on this card would be under it. Real quick run down: 1) IRS pinned Marty Jannetty after a clothesline in 14:10. * 2) Owen Hart made Cuban Assassin submit to the sharpshooter in 12:16. †* 3) Bret Hart rolled up Jeff Jarrett in 13:25. Makes no sense how they've built Jeff up and bury him right away. Real disappointing. *† 4) Crush beat Randy Savage in a 2 out of 3 fall piece of garbage that they called falls count anywhere. Randy took fall 1 in 1:03. Crush pinned Savage with a backbreaker near the runway after 10:33 of real boring so called action. Before the third fall could start Ludvig Borga attacked Randy from behind and the ref counted him out. Dud 5) Lex Luger beat Ludvig Borga in a coward waves the flag match in 8:10. Borga had Crush at ringside who argued he didn't wave the flag. -* 6) Smoking Gunns beat Fatu and another Samoan. Samu missed his flight and was replaced by yet another cousin of the Anoi family. How many are there? **† 7) Tatanka beat Yokozuna via DQ when Yoko hit Tatonto with the salt bucket. Dud What's the deal with the native American getting treated royally? He suaks. Dud..... Barry read me the letter that is in this issue from Mike Lano. I only have this to say. My character stands for itself. There are more stories among the hardcore fraternity that shows what kind of character Lano has. I have at no point in the last couple of years took responsibility for the information printed about Wade Keller in my year ender 2 years ago. Lano gave me the info. I take responsibility for printing bogus info.....For those that read Jeff Mullins slaughtering of me in his last Sushi, I sent a letter to him for inclusion of his next issue. No need for non-Sushi subscribers to waste their time on something they wouldn't know what I was talking about. Huh?... I'm gearing up for my biggest PPV party ever. Guests for Rumble include Klon and family, Chris Qvalmann and future family, Co-worker Merle Conway and family, Tony Aragona, and Jim Berkley and son. Menu includes honey baked ham, home made beans, salad, etc. No pizza to be found. See ya, Ron

BUMPS & GRINDS

by Mike Terry

Surprisingly, I haven't yet seen this reported in any wrestling publications. It appeared in Broadcasting and Cable magazine on December 20, 1993. Titan and Summit Media Group have teamed to develop the World Martial Arts Federation--the WWF of kick boxing. The concept and TV program will be pitched at the NATPE international programming conference in Miami this month. Vince McMahon and Summit Media's Shelly Hirsch collaborated on the idea. By the way, Summit Media's parent company--Leisure Concepts--serves as the licensing agent for Titan merchandise. Quite a few zeroes in that bank balance, no doubt. An outfit called Gold Coast Entertainment is producing 26 episodes of the series for next season with a budget of \$125,000-\$150,000 per episode. According to Hirsch, the WMAF (a working title) "will not feature fighting in the traditional sense, like that in a boxing ring, but will be done on theme sets like a desert, jungle, or Garden of the Ninja Priest." So, despite Titan's belt tightnin', it appears there's money for a major new venture. Sounds promising!

Lots makin' news these days. How about Jim Cornette? Honestly, the more I read from him, the less I like the guy. I'm discovering why he and Bill Watts get along so well. It appears to me that even though he may not have instigated the fight which led to the riot in Wise, Virginia, he could have prevented it by having the maturity to control his temper. When attacked, wrestlers will fight. I have no problem with that. But could Cornette have restrained himself enough to prevent the attack in this case? I think that's a strong possibility. Having read his letters to Torch and Observer, one word comes to mind: arrogance. And Jim: maybe a little less time writing letters and a little more time spent working on your interviews might be in order. It's been way too long since your name has come up when talking about great performances on the mike.

Then there's Starrcade and Ric Flair's performance. Let's give credit to Vader, Race and the hierarchy in WCW for a job well done. I can't remember a more legitimately emotional moment in wrestling than the post-match backstage interview. A truly human display in a business sorely lacking in humanity much of the time.

Quotes of da month: Jesse Ventura on Gene Okerlund: "By the time I'm through with him, he'll be anchoring the Arizona in Hawaii.".....Cornette on Jack Tunney: "...the most respected president since Grover Cleveland.".....When Jim Ross mentioned acquiring some soap to spiff up Bastian Booger, Monsoon responded: "You'd need Janitor-in-a-Drum to clean this guy up.".....Okerlund when introing Race: "He is the veteran septuagenarian." The funny thing was Race had no idea what it meant.....Ventura on Sir William: "He's just a valet. He's only 4'8".".....Ventura on Missy slapping Hawk at Starrcade: "A lot of feeling behind that one.".....Tommy Rich on USWA TV: "Somebuddy say summpin' bout stylin' and profilin'?".....Max Payne: "Hey, hey, Paulas...we're gonna bury you." (If you're under 30, you probably won't get it).....Ross: "I wasn't here for the first broadcast of 'Mania,' I was in Parts Unknown.".....Monsoon on one of the rugrat ring announcers: "We need subtitles!".....Cactus Jack: "Bang, bang!" Payne: "Mother?".....Ventura trying to ID the object in the Assassin's mask: "Whadduya think it is, Tony? Some of Lois' cooking?"

Random stuff: Doug Gilbert seems to be the Clint Howard of professional wrestling. Clint is director Ron (Opie) Howard's brother who, although a seemingly fine performer, rarely works outside of projects his brother is involved with.....nice segue to a Separated at Birth: Clint Howard and decidedly untalented referee/manager Paul Neighbors.....I'm impressed with 3 young men this month: Mark Starr, WWF jobber Brian Walsh, and, yes--Ole's kid Brian Anderson. Brian's not bad at all for someone just starting out.....Tony Schiavone continues to impress me with his insight and analysis of the matches.....Have you seen the Power Hour opening montage lately? If you haven't, don't feel badly, neither has the brass at WCW. It features Barry Windham, Van Hammer, the Hollywood Blondes as a team, and Davey Boy Smith.....Should McMahon remove himself from WWF TV pending the outcome of the trial? I check in with a strong "NO." He hasn't been convicted of anything, he's vehemently denying the charges, and to the public-at-large, scratching himself from the TV lineup would seem to give credence to charges he's trying to portray as lacking in substance. Besides, he's the best they've got left and definitely needs to be there.

I leave you this month amidst feuding, fussing, and in-fighting among people who should spend more time concentrating on things that are really important in life (like friendship), with some words from no less than Tony Schiavone on WCW's Christmas show. It seems somewhat relevant: "One thing that history has taught me...regardless of who we lose or where people go, wrestling's always gonna be around in some form or another. And life goes on." So enjoy it, dammit! Later.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS by Dave Scherer

I just watched the final match of the All Japan World's Strongest League Tag Tournament and all I can say is WOW. Mitsuhashi Misawa and Kenta Kobashi won the tourney on the final night when they beat Akira Taue and Toshiaki Kawada in an absolute fabulous match. I have had people tell me that they don't watch Japanese wrestling because they don't speak the language, and therefore the shows don't convey their message to them. People watch wrestling for different reasons and to see different things, so I completely understand their position. However, in this match the storyline was readily apparent. You had Kawada wrestling his heart out with a blown out left knee. You had Taue who turned up his regular performance at least a notch. You had Misawa who looked to finally be over his nagging injuries of 1993 working like he was 21. And you had the World's best wrestler, Kobashi, finally getting a pin on a major show on a major opponent when he put a prone Kawada away for the pin. In the presentation ceremony afterward, Misawa was very animated, for him, and it was obvious that Kobashi was fighting back tears. Just a super, super show...Speaking of AJ, the tourney matches on a whole were fabulous. Steve Williams has really upped his performances since his amazing match with Kobashi a few months back. His partner, Big Bossman, also worked some great matches. In fact, I like this team better than the team of Williams and Gordy. Stan Hansen was his usual great self and for the second year in a row, Giant Baba filled in for an injured wrestler and wrestled better than I ever remember him doing. I have read criticisms in other circles that All Japan is getting predictable and perhaps staid, but as far as I am concerned, it is the reason I am a wrestling fan...I saw a tape of the All Japan Women's show from Sumo Hall on 12/6. As usual, it was great stuff. I will be sad to see Akira Hokuto retire and Bull Nakano continue her phasedown. Time goes on, for all of us, but we don't have to like it...All Japan has been advertising a really hot looking video game. It has all the major AJ guys on it and looks great. Time to ask Katuyuki about the specs of that puppy. Speaking of Katuyuki, he told me a while back that he went to 107 house shows in 1993. 107! I don't know about you, but there have not been 7 shows in my area that I wanted to see last year. That is amazing.

I owe Wade Keller an apology. No kidding. It seems that I erroneously blamed Wade for appointing Bruce Mitchell "Wrestling's Most Respected Columnist". Well, my editor Barry "Surfer Dan" Rose informed me that Bruce told him that he gave the title to himself. Really. I have also heard that Bruce spends most of his free time watching wrestling or talking wrestling on the phone with other sheet types. If that is the truth, I have some advice for Bruce. Unplug the phone. Turn off the TV. Go outside and let the other things in the world into your life. I like wrestling as much as the next guy, and that is evident by the fact that I take the time to write this and you take the time to read it, but to me it is an outlet, kind of like the toy department in the big Walmart of life. When it starts to dominate ones life, it's time to take a step back. That's what makes this sheet so much fun for me. It's just a bunch of psychotic, hardcore wrestling fans who enjoy the business, but don't take it too seriously. Being "Wrestling's Most Respected Columnist" is very similar to being the most well adjusted guy at the State Hospital...I was surprised that the Guru put another ad for the hotline into last week's sheet. I'm sure that he did it as a favor, given that there was also a plug for his sheet on the ad which tells me that it the ad was not specifically done for the WOK, but I just don't see the point. If someone already gets the WOK, are they really the hotline type? At 99 cents a minute, Dave's 5 minute segment, 3 times a week would cost the average moron, er caller, almost 15 dollars a week. Who in the right, or even wrong, mind would spend that kind of money just to know what is going on in the wrestling world when for a buck and a half they can read the same info a few days later? Maybe the ECW Mutants or people who aspire to be respected wrestling columnists...Speaking of ECW, I see that the Wadester can't stop his gushing about their new "MTV Style" TV shows. I talked to a few of my old hardcore pals who have seen the shows (and don't worry Tod Gordon I am sure that they saw them via satellite or cable and didn't, God forbid, buy your tapes from a tape dealer) and like myself they are not overly impressed. I saw that the Wadester gave the 12/21 show an 85 on his Poindexter "Let's rate the TV Shows" scorecard. Well, he must be watching something different than I am. Since Paul P. Dangerously took over as bocker, there have been fewer matches on the shows and more repetitive videos and bizarre commentary from the eminently annoying Natty in the House. When Gilbert was booking, I watched the show every week, like I do with Sucky Mountain. Since Paul P took over, I listen to most of the show while I read the paper. And I don't buy their explanation that the explosion at Holiday Hell would have been bigger if a cop hadn't "kicked the gunpowder" either. I was there when Gordon forgot to bring the barbed wire and blamed it on the State Athletic Commission...I don't know if any of you read the Son of Sushi Meitzer edition, but if you didn't, it made for some interesting reading. While Editor Jeff Mullins didn't come clean as to what the source of his feud with Meitzer was all about, I'd like to comment on a few of the points raised by readers.

1) "Dave does not include all of the 'gossip' that he used to." While I too miss reading all of the juicy dirt, I can understand why he stopped printing it. When he started the sheet, it was a smalltime thing that had a tiny subscription base. He didn't really have to worry about things like lawsuits and if he was sued, he could have just folded up the tent with no real financial repercussion. Now, Dave is not about to kill his cash cow, as none of us would if we were him, so the gossip is gone.

2) "When the WOK started, Dave said that it would never be results bulletin and now it is." Good point. I could do without 3 to 4 pages of results too, but I have never liked reading trivial results. Big shows yes. House shows from Buttplug, Iowa, nope.

3) "He doesn't answer/return phone calls and when you are of no use to him you won't hear from him." Both are a sad fact of life. If Dave returned every call he got, he'd never get off of the phone. I would be a real hypocrite to bash him here since I have Caller ID and an answering machine that I use to screen my calls. Same goes for not hearing from him if you are of no professional use to him. That's just how it works. I like to think that Dave and I are friends, but I also know that I would not hear from him too much, or he from me, if I did not have results or news to share. It's just the nature of the beast. Until next time...

NERVE ENDINGS

BY PETE LEDERBERG

My most sincere and heartfelt condolences to Barry and his family on the passing of his father. Mike was one of the most genuinely decent people that I have ever met, and will be missed by everyone he touched. Happy New Year to all of you. Let's all hope that 1994 brings all of us happiness, health and success in whatever we deem important.

I need to make a public apology to you (our readers), and to Jeff Bowdren. My last column was written to the best of my ability, but was not interpreted as I intended by everyone I spoke with, hence this explanation for what must be my unclear writing. My last column was directed at the media at large, and mostly at the wrestling sheet writers and nowadays hardcores against sensationalism and hypocrisy. Unfortunately, it was interpreted as a malicious attack on solely Jeff Bowdren. Certainly part of the article was against Jeff, but the whole thing wasn't. He was used as an example of what I was writing about, not the entire issue. I also would like to publicly apologize to Jeff for going too far. I have already spoken to him, but felt since the attack was public, so should the apology. Jeff actually suggested to me that I read my articles in the future to someone else, as hearing your own voice saying something often is the best test of your intentions and validity. Also, getting someone's opinion that you trust can only help. I have done this in the past, but the people I generally talk with tend to egg me on, and also start the fire by giving me things that they feel will get me going that they don't necessarily want to write about. My writing in the past was generally of the news reporting kind, kind of like what Ron "The Lake Mary Truth Fairy" Lemieux is SUPPOSED to be doing for CS (Thanks to Jeff Mullins for the nickname), as opposed to being a columnist. It really wasn't hard reporting news correctly, at least for me.

As usual, I'll tell each of you to think for yourselves. Listen and discuss things with others, but don't be afraid to formulate your own opinion. Look yourself in the mirror as honestly as possible, and be sure not to be hypocrites. Don't ever expect from others what you're unwilling to do yourself. Conversely, do unto others as you'd like done unto yourself. The truth often hurts, but all of us have faults. Don't be afraid to realize that you're not perfect. Realize both your strengths and weaknesses and try to work on improving the weaknesses. Until you admit that something's wrong, you'll never right it. It's a "well known secret" (thanks to the immortal Killer Karl Kox for the quote) that wrestlers usually talk behind each others' backs, but rarely say anything to someone's face, since you never know who you're going to need for a job later (someone could become booker, etc.). The thing that concerns me is that it seems the hardcores are becoming the same way. As I've said before, in the 70's (and probably before), wrestling fans generally defended their "sport", and were quite supportive of those who also supported wrestling, and were rarely critical (thanks to Greg Goode for planting the seed of old-style versus new-style hardcores into my head). Today, you rarely see a hardcore critical of a hardcore in print (in other sheets), but most of them talk behind each others' backs. This is a problem that I have with a lot of the hardcores now, either they're afraid to say something to your face, will say something but be afraid to sign their real name, or feed you stuff so you'll say it for them. By the way, I am using say to your face as the same as putting it in print. Have some guts guys! Don't be afraid to say what you really feel. Don't become gutless back-stabbers, going behind people's backs. Come dead ahead, and say what you feel. Putting all the stuff together that I've said this month, have the strength of your convictions and feelings to say what you feel, be willing to confront and listen to others, but think for yourselves!

SMOKY MOUNTAIN HOTSPOTS

BY TIM WHITEHEAD

After a painfully long absence, it's time for yet another insightful edition of Smoky Mountain Hotspots™, the wrestling column Janet Reno tried to ban, but failed. Since the last Hotspots™ column hit your mailbox, WCW had an excellent main event which put Ric Flair over like he should've been, which shows just how long it's been since the last column.

A lot has happened in SMW over the last couple of months. Among other things, there was a riot in Wise, Virginia which has understandably sparked a lot of controversy, most notably in the Torch, where Wade Keller gave the incident extensive coverage and Jim Cornette added his side of the story in a letter-to-the-editor the next week. I wasn't in Wise the night the incident occurred (which is either fortunate or unfortunate, depending on your point of view). As with any disturbance of this nature the eyewitness accounts vary and each side will inevitably blame the other for starting the trouble. Based on the weight of evidence thus far, it appears the security guy who interfered in Jim Cornette's standard routine must at least assume responsibility for starting the trouble. He also must bear responsibility for returning with a bunch of brawl-hungry friends after being ejected from the building. True, Jim Cornette & Jimmy Del Ray lost their cool pretty quickly as well, but how often are they confronted by a guy hired to do crowd control who interferes in the match because he's too stupid to comprehend what's going on? The Torch reported that the fans in attendance thought the first part of the altercation was just part of the show, largely because it's incomprehensible that anyone could be so moronic as to actually interfere in a wrestling angle. I definitely do not endorse the use by Cornette of racial slurs, but neither can I judge him for saying things in the heat of the moment that any one of us might also say in the same situation. I suppose there are individuals who would never use words such as "nigger" (or for that matter, "honky") no matter what the situation but I doubt there are very many who would not use them in the heat of a brawl. I arrive at these conclusions for basically two reasons. First, I discussed the matter with an SMW employee who was on the scene that night. I know from personal experience that he is an honest observer and I believe his account of the incident. Second, while it's been noted that there were four wrestling cards in Wise during 1993 and this was the only one ending in a riot, it should also be noted that in nearly two years of SMW live events this is the only time an incident like this has occurred. Well, I guess that's all I have to say about this but I'd be interested to hear what CHAIRSHOTS® readers have to say about the matter, so if you agree with me or disagree, drop Barry a line. Wait a minute! That's not all I have to say about the matter! Wasn't that Bentley guy quoted in the Torch the most self-righteously pretentious guy you've ever heard? No, it won't solve all the problems in Wise, Virginia he opined, but it did help bring the community together. All this because a bunch of scatter-brained local thugs got into it with the wrestlers during a card. The guy must think he's Sally Jesse Raphael!

Now, on to some criticism. In Knoxville on Christmas day The Bullet (alleged by many to be Bob Armstrong though these same people probably thought Dusty Rhodes was The Midnight Rider) was defeated by Dick Murdoch. The stipulation was that if Murdoch lost, Cornette would be shaved bald but if Bullet lost he'd have to unmask. As you all probably know, Bullet lost but unmasked to reveal yet another mask! Come on guys, this stuff killed WCW! At least it's a sure thing the Terry Funk vs. Bullet match on 2/13 will end with a clear winner.

The Brian Lee vs. Dirty White Boy vs. Tracy Smothers triangular (that's a three-sided match in case Bentley is reading) feud is pretty hot. The angle Cornette & The Bodies are doing with the Furnas Brothers where they rip into U.T. is great. Talk about starting a riot! On the other hand, Prince Kharis sucks!

See ya next month! I'm off to the Magic Wok. I think Melody's working tonight!

Sucker Punch

BY BARRY ROSE



The last six weeks of my life have been among the most important and emotionally jarring periods that I have ever known. After years of being mentally Bobbittized, my sputtering marriage was finally put out of it's misery. Work related stress reached an all time high, while finances continued to sink to new depths. But on January 12, an event occurred that seemed to trivialize everything else. My Dad, my best friend, passed away. It seemed like the earth stood still for me that Wednesday as floods of memories poured from my mind, remembering the man who not only gave me life, but also nurtured me through all of it's ups and downs. I recalled a monumentously happy childhood spent with my Dad as he showed me the correct way to throw a baseball, the many joys of the oceans and it's beaches (something that will live on in me forever), and the appreciation for the finer things in life, like burgers and professional wrestling. My Dad, maybe like yours, was the person responsible for taking me and exposing me to wrestling. My Dad, in all actuality, is the man responsible for CHAIRSHOTS.

My Dad and I spent at least two nights a week for at least ten years going to the matches together. Some kids went to football games or other sporting events with their Dad, but wrestling was always our shared passion. My Dad had witnessed many great events in his hometown of Columbus, Ohio, and had shared with me many stories of his times spent hanging out with the wrestlers. He never cared if the worker was a job boy or main event star. He never let the race of a human being instigate or influence his thought process. He only cared about the person. And that was the easiest way to describe him-caring. I don't think he'd be too happy if I wrote a long, sermonizing piece proclaiming my love for him. He already knew that. But, I don't think he'd mind if I shared with you his all time favorite wrestling story.

Bubba Douglas, a prelim wrestler and referee throughout Florida in the late seventies and eighties, was unquestionably my Dad's favorite wrestling personality. We had gotten to know Bubba through Rocky Johnson, and my Dad was speaking to Bubba a couple of times a week on the phone. One Wednesday, my Dad got a call from Bubba, who was in Tampa. He asked my Dad if he could pick he and Ray Candy up at this rinky dink airport in Lauderdale. They had been bumped from their flight on a major airlines, and had secured the last two remaining seats on this small plane. My Dad assured Bubba that we'd be there to meet him. Well, we arrived at the airport about six thirty, and no sign of Bubba or Ray anywhere. By seven thirty, the plane had still not arrived. Fifteen minutes later, the plane lands and Bubba and Ray come storming off the plane screaming that they're scheduled to go in twenty minutes. They squeeze into the back seat of our car, and I join my Dad up front. Bubba makes a comment that if my Dad can get him to the building in time (which, incidentally, was the Hollywood Sportatorium) he'll pick up the check at anywhere we decided to have a meal. My Dad drove like a bat out of hell to get them there in time, all the while Bubba and Ray were getting prepared for their match by changing in the backseat of our car. We screeched up to the building and these two guys (Bubba about 265, Candy close to 300 lbs.) pop out of the car and within minutes they're in the ring. Bubba yells at my Dad that the return flight leaves at nine o' clock and that he should have the car running. My Dad and I sprint back outside and as my Dad is starting the car back up, he starts to chuckle. I asked him why he was laughing so hard. He told me to turn around. When I did, I saw Bubba and Ray running towards the car, still in full wrestling gear. Bubba was dropping things out of his gym bag, and he and Ray were both in obvious hysterics. They squeezed back in the back seat and my Dad delivered them safely to the airport. Bubba and Ray got on the plane that night and promised us dinner next week. Next week arrived, and Bubba decided to take everybody out for dinner. Ray was there, Rocky Johnson, Don Serrano, me and my Dad, and I'm sure a few more people that I'm forgetting. By the time the check came around, Bubba pulls out his wallet and in a real nervous fashion tells everyone that he doesn't have enough to cover the check. By the look on his face, I'm convinced that he was deeply embarrassed. Rocky and Serrano ribbed Bubba mercilessly, but my Dad picked up the check, no questions asked. Later that night, my Dad came over to me and was beaming ear-to-ear. "Why are you smiling like that?", I asked. He simply held out his hand to reveal a wad of cash. He didn't have to tell me where he had gotten it from (Rocky told me that Bubba had hit everybody up for money so he could pay my Dad back). Driving home that night my Dad explained that the money wasn't really important to him. "The only thing really important are friendships, how you treat people and how they treat you". I saw the smile that came over his face when he said that and realized that my true idol wasn't a big three hundred pounder in the ring, but my own Dad. And I think that he knew that. You'll be missed.....

CHAIRSHOTS MAILBOX

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**CHAIRSHOTS WELCOMES ALL LETTERS, COMMENTS AND
CRITICISMS. ALL LETTERS ARE PRESUMED FOR PUB-
LICATION UNLESS REQUESTED OTHERWISE.**

For starters, in no way did I have anything to do with a letter supposedly written by Carlos Rey. Nor did I have anything to do with Sushi's Mullins, and we didn't write such a letter together. I have cleared this up with John Arezzi, from whom I discovered this b.s. in the first place, offering to pay for a handwriting analysis. I was riding John hard for most of the year, so he'd refund subscribers, and people who never received tapes they bought from him. And John's making good on his promises. Frankly, I don't think John Arezzi deserved another shootkick from Lemieux either. We're out there trying to do something positive. What are you doing Ron? Currently I'm plugging and trying to help Arezzi's attorney-partner Ron Skoler (who're doing a fabulous job bringing AAA action to this country) each and every week of my TV show, now seen on cable systems in 9 states and 3 provinces. I plugged John Arezzi's tapes, foreign shows and conventions regularly on my New York-tailored TV show, seen 4 times a week on New York's Manhattan and Paragon cable systems, and I've added 3 Chicago, 2 St. Louis and another Oklahoma City cable access system to Canvas Cavity's family. I recently returned from helping promote, and do the program for Red Bastien's oldtimer's Texas Shootout Convention, and last May I threw what many called one of the best Legend's conventions ever, with attendance in the hundreds. While there, I raised college funds for Bruiser Brody's and Pat O'Connor's sons in presentations; and gave out expensive trophies to Sam Muchnick (made from pieces of the torn down Kiel), to Paul Boesch's widow, to Ted Debiase, Ernie Ladd, Lou Thesz, Killer Kowalski, Al Costello, Boyd Pierce, Tiger Conway, Sr. and others. Several months ago I was the youngest elected ex. board member to the Cauliflower Alley Club along with Kowalski, The Destroyer, Blassie and others. I screw up, spread unintended bad gossip and err just like everyone does. I don't need Ron's slander/liabel, nor does Ron Lemieux need to expose himself to a lawsuit. Ron Hasn't bothered to pick up a phone and call me, because he has yet to apologize for having me take the blame for his own AR torch turkey fiasco when he wouldn't verify his facts with Steve Beverly before going to press. His words "I can't take the bad p.r. as a newsletter editor...you'll have to..." will forever be etched in my mind, Klon's mind and most of his other friends who are well aware of his mistake. Evan Ginzburg, another old AR columnist still says that Ron only contacted us when he wanted something. Why I have a mind to get ol' Herb Abrams on Ron's case, or at minimum to promote a show in Lake Mary using Ron as ring announcer. Maybe that would be too harsh. Otherwise, I think you guys are doing a terrific job with the sheet, from what I hear and see. Just give me a little credit for shooting for all major US newsstand mags (Apter's, W. World, W. Main Event, and for newsstand mags in England and other foreign countries). I'm busting my ass. Give me a little credit instead of giving me a melvin at each opportunity. Ernie Ladd and Jim Ross' "why dontcha call someone up and get your facts straight," has Ron Lemieux's name written all over it.

DR. MIKE LANO
ALAMEDA, CA

Dear Barry,
I must first preface this by saying that I like Pete Lederberg's writing. I have never met nor talked with him, but I usually enjoy his column (except maybe when he asked Nash what his favorite flavor of JELLO was or some other important question like that!). I enjoyed his column in CS #16, but was prompted to reply on a few items. I've had my problems with Jerry Lawler and you will not be seeing me come to his defense on much of anything. I still like "The King" wrestling character, but as for the person, let's just say that I don't trust him. I've been following his statutory rape case very close because the USWA is in my backyard. I could really care less whether Jerry is guilty of this charge or not. I view this chatge differently than the law. If the girl consented and Lawler didn't force her to have sex, then let it be. If it was my little girl, I wouldn't need the law. I'd just whip his ass and send her to her room. At 13 years old, the girl knew what she was doing-whether the law says that or not. The law is the only real problem in all of this. If the courts find Jerry Guilty, then he is guilty. If not, then he is not. Simple as that. But, Jerry got on my last nerve with his videos to show how good of a person he was. He bothered me when he stayed in character to do a wrestling interview about the rape case, and really pissed me off with his trip to the VA Hospital in Memphis. My Dad spent the last days of his life in and out of that hospital. Lawler's promo wasn't for the hospital, But for himself. I would have been happier if Lawler would have boughttime on the TV station when they were not airing the wrestling show. But, had I been in his shoes, I'd probably done the same thing. Finally, the main point that I disagreed with Pete about was that he implied that we didn't have the right to make fun of Lawler when we didn't know if he was guilty or not. When Lawler puts himself in the public eye and is considered a "TV star" by many, he is then opening himself up for criticism. I, you, and Barry by writing something in this zine are also giving people, to a lesser degree, a "free shot" at us. If Lawler can take all of the praise he gets, then when something goes wrong he should be able to take the bad with the good. I also don't think that we are trying to "rip wrestling apart" by making fun of Lawler. It is all in fun and I think that was what Bowdren was trying to do-have fun. I consider Bowdren a friend. He has always been one of my fave writers in wrestling fandom. I haven't spoken to him in over a year, so don't think that he wanted me to write this. I figure Jeff will defend himself. But, as for Jeff calling himself "Booker" or "#1 writer for CHAIRSHOTS", I feel that it is all in fun. I don't believe that Jeff believes his own hype, if he does, then he is the only one. Take your own advice Pete, "lighten up."

BRIAN TRAMEL
STEELE, MO

**NEXT ISSUE OUT FEB. 15-BIGELOW RETURNS, JEFF
COHEN DROPS IN, BRUCE MITCHELL'S BATHROOM AND
MUCH DELAYED PLUGS!**

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING CHAIRSHOTS!